

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PURITAN MOVEMENT

BY the end of the sixteenth century the divorce between religious theory and economic realities had long been evident. But in the meantime, within the bosom of religious theory itself, a new system of ideas was being matured, which was destined to revolutionize all traditional values, and to turn on the whole field of social obligations a new and penetrating light. On a world heaving with expanding energies, and on a Church uncertain of itself, rose, after two generations of premonitory mutterings, the tremendous storm of the Puritan movement. The forest bent ; the oaks snapped ; the dry leaves were driven before a gale, neither all of winter nor all of spring, but violent and life-giving, pitiless and tender, sounding strange notes of yearning and contrition, as of voices wrung from a people dwelling in Meshec, which signifies Prolonging, in Kedar, which signifies Blackness ; while amid the blare of trumpets, and the clash of arms, and the rending of the carved work of the Temple, humble to God and haughty to man, the soldier-saints swept over battle-field and scaffold their garments rolled in blood.

In the great silence which fell when the Titans had turned to dust, in the Augustan calm of the eighteenth century, a voice was heard to observe that

religious  
liberty was a considerable advantage,  
regarded <sup>rt</sup> merely  
in a commercial view/<sup>11</sup> A new world, it was  
evident,  
had arisen. And this new world, born of  
the vision  
of the mystic, the passion of the prophet,  
the sweat  
and agony of heroes famous and unknown,  
as well as  
of mundane ambitions and commonplace  
cupidities,  
was one in which, since " Thorough " was  
no more,